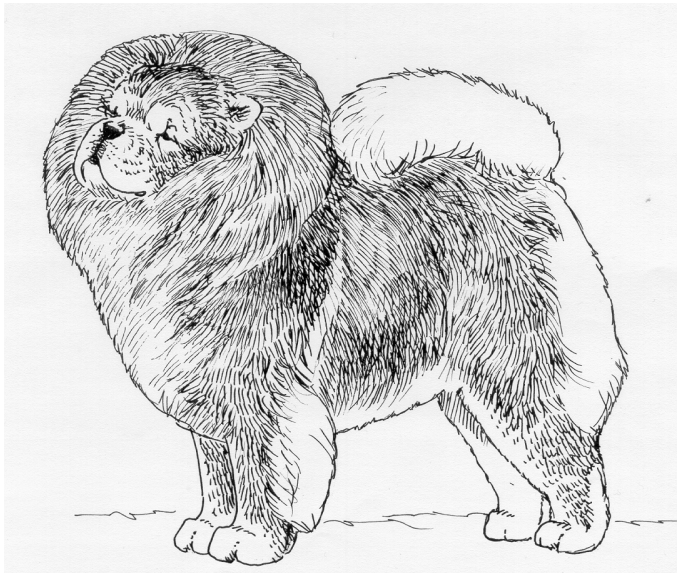


# CHOW CHOW

## Official UKC Breed Standard

Revised January 1, 2020



The goals and purposes of this breed standard include: to furnish guidelines for breeders who wish to maintain the quality of their breed and to improve it; to advance this breed to a state of similarity throughout the world; and to act as a guide for judges.

Breeders and judges have the responsibility to avoid any conditions or exaggerations that are detrimental to the health, welfare, essence and soundness of this breed, and must take the responsibility to see that these are not perpetuated.

Any departure from the following should be considered a fault, and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

### HISTORY

The Chow Chow originated in Asia thousands of years ago. While the ancestors of this breed are unknown, the breed can be traced back at least 2,000 years to the Han dynasty of China. The Chow Chow originated as a sporting dog, used by Chinese aristocrats to hunt pheasant and partridge. The name "Chow Chow" is derived from pidgin-English slang used by sea captains to describe the contents of cargo crates full of miscellaneous Chinese goods. These oriental dogs became popular during the Victorian era in England and first appeared in the United States in 1890. Today, the Chow Chow is primarily a family companion and guard dog.

The Chow Chow was recognized by the United Kennel Club in 1934.

### Northern Breed Group

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### GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Chow Chow is a medium-sized, sturdily built, Spitz-type dog of leonine appearance, with a square body; large, broad head with a short, broad and deep muzzle; prick ears with rounded tips; and a short-coupled body. The squareness of his body is emphasized by his high-set tail, which is carried on the back, and by the lack of angulation in his hindquarters. The hock joint and metatarsals lie in a straight line below the hip joint. The stilted gait resulting from these unique rear quarters is essential to correct type in this breed. The Chow Chow's face has a characteristic scowl. His tongue is blue-black, and his coat may be smooth or rough.

### CHARACTERISTICS

The Chow Chow is a dignified, aloof dog, with a keen intelligence. It is natural for the Chow to be reserved with strangers, but never timid or aggressive. Part of the Chow Chow's reserve with strangers is due to the dog's limited peripheral vision. Strangers approaching a Chow Chow should take this into consideration.

### HEAD

The head is large in proportion to the size of the body, but not so much as to make the dog appear top-heavy. Viewed from the side, the skull and muzzle are approximately parallel, joined by a moderate stop, which appears steeper than it is because of the padding over the brows. The muzzle is shorter than the skull but never less than one-third the length of the skull.

Viewed from the front, the Chow Chow's characteristic scowl is achieved by a marked brow with a padded button of skin just above the inner corner of the eye; by sufficient loose skin to form frowning brows and a distinct furrow between the eyes beginning at the base of the muzzle and extending up the forehead; by correct eye shape and placement; and by correct ear shape, carriage, placement.

*Faults:* Excessive loose skin.

**SKULL** - The skull is broad and flat, viewed from side or front.

**MUZZLE** - The muzzle is broad and deep, with plenty of fill under the eyes and no taper from the stop to the nose. The length from stop to nose is equal to the depth. The square appearance of the muzzle is caused by a combination of correct bone structure and padding of the muzzle and lips. When the mouth is closed, the upper lips completely cover the lower. Lips, inner mouth tissue, and gums are black. The top surface and

edges of the tongue are solid blue-black, the darker the better.

*Faults:* Lips, inner mouth tissue, or gums any other color than black, or spotted; pendulous lips; excessive padding of the muzzle causing it to appear other than square.

*Disqualification:* Top surface or edges of the tongue red, pink, or spotted with red or pink.

**TEETH** - The Chow Chow has a complete set of good-sized, evenly spaced, white teeth meeting in a scissors bite.

**NOSE** - Large and wide. Nose is black, except for cream and near white Chow Chows, in which case a lighter colored nose is permissible. In blues and fawns, self-colored nose is permissible. Black nose is preferable in all cases.

*Disqualifications:* Nose spotted or any other color than those allowed.

**EYES** - Eyes are dark brown, almond-shaped, and of moderate size. They are set deeply, obliquely, and wide apart. Eye rims are black and tight. The padded skin around the eyes and the brow must not obscure the pupils. The correct size, shape and placement of the eyes create an Oriental expression.

*Serious Faults:* Entropion or ectropion; pupils wholly or partly obscured by loose skin.

**EARS** - Ears are prick with slightly rounded tips. They are small, triangular and moderately thick. The ears are set wide apart and carried stiffly erect. They are tilted forward over the eyes and slightly towards each other, contributing to the scowling expression of the breed, which should never be achieved by loose, wrinkled skin on the head.

*Disqualifications:* Ear breaking at any point from the base to the tip; ear not carried stiffly erect.

## **NECK**

The neck is well muscled, slightly arched, and with sufficient length and power to carry the head proudly erect when standing at attention.

## **FOREQUARTERS**

The Chow Chow's shoulders are well muscled and moderately angulated. The shoulder blade and upper arm are of approximately equal length. The shoulder blade is laid back at an approximate angle of 55 degrees and forms an angle of about 110 degrees with the upper arm. The tips of the shoulder blades are moderately close together.

**FORELEGS** - The forelegs are straight, muscular, and have heavy bone that must be in proportion to the body. The elbows are well back and close to the body. The distance from the elbow to the ground equals one-half the dog's height at the withers. Viewed from the front, the forelegs are parallel and set wide apart.

Viewed from the side, the pasterns are short and upright.

*Fault:* Wrists knuckling over.

## **BODY**

The Chow Chow's square body is an essential element of breed type. The length of body, measured from prosternum to point of buttocks, is equal in length to the height, measured from withers to ground. The body is compact, broad, deep and well muscled. The topline is short and level. The chest is broad, muscular, and deep, extending to the elbow. Viewed from the side, the prosternum extends slightly in front of the point of shoulder. The ribs are well sprung at the top but narrow at the lower end to allow the shoulder, upper arm, and elbow to fit smoothly against the chest wall. The loin is short, well-muscled, broad, and deep. The croup is short, broad, and level.

*Faults:* Slab sided; narrow chest.

## **HINDQUARTERS**

The hindquarters are broad, powerful, and well muscled, the same width as the forequarters.

**HIND LEGS** - The rear legs are approximately as heavy in bone as the forelegs. Viewed from the rear, the legs are straight, parallel, and set wide apart. The rear pasterns are short and perpendicular to the ground. Viewed from the side, the stifle joint shows little angulation and the hock joint is well let down and nearly straight. The hock joint and rear pastern lie in a straight line below the hip joint.

*Serious Faults:* Unsound stifle or hock joints.

## **FEET**

Feet are round and compact, with thick pads. Dewclaws may be removed.

## **TAIL**

The tail is set high and carried close to the back at all times.

## **COAT**

There are two equally acceptable coat types. Both are double-coated. No preference is given to either type.

**Rough Coat:** The outer coat is abundant, thick, straight, and rather coarse in texture. The undercoat is soft, fine, and dense. The coat stands away from the body and forms a profuse ruff around the head and neck, framing the face. The hindquarters and tail are well feathered. Coat length varies widely, and males may have a longer coat and ruff than females. Judges should emphasize density and texture more than length when evaluating this breed. Trimming should be discouraged except the face and legs may be neatened by trimming the whiskers, feet, and pasterns.

Smooth Coat: The outer coat is hard, dense, and smooth with no obvious ruff or feathering on the legs or tail.

Puppy coats are soft, thick, and woolly.

### **COLOR**

The Chow Chow comes in five equally acceptable colors: Red (light golden to deep mahogany), black, blue, cinnamon (light fawn to deep cinnamon), and cream. Colors are solid but may have lighter shadings in the ruff, tail, and feathering.

*Disqualification:* Albinism.

### **HEIGHT**

A mature Chow Chow ranges in height from 17 to 20 inches, measured at the withers. Correct proportions (square body, width of forequarters equal to width of hindquarters, distance from elbow to ground equal to one-half the height at the withers, lowest point of chest level with elbows) are to be given more emphasis when judging this breed than size.

### **GAIT**

Correct Chow Chow gait is an essential element of breed type. Viewed from the side, the rear gait is short and stilted. The rear leg moves up and forward like a pendulum, causing a slight bounce in the rump. There is little extension either forward or to the rear. There is no roll through the midsection. Viewed from the front or rear, the legs move straight forward. As speed increases, feet tend to converge toward center line of balance. The Chow Chow is somewhat lacking in speed but has excellent endurance.

*Faults:* Front legs swinging out in semi-circles; mincing front gait; hackney gait; extension in the rear.

### **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

*(A dog with a Disqualification must not be considered for placement in a conformation event, and must be reported to UKC.)*

Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchid.

Viciousness, marked shyness, or cowardliness.

Top surface or edges of the tongue red, pink, or spotted with red or pink.

Nose spotted or any other color than those allowed.

Ear breaking at any point from the base to the tip.

Ear not carried stiffly erect.

Albinism.